The Hollow of Her Hand

by George Barr McCutcheon

SYNOPSIS.

Challis Wrandall is found murdered in a road house near New York. Mrs. Wrandall is summoned from the city and identifies the body. A young woman who accompanied Wrandall to the inn and subsequently disappeared, is suspected. Wrandall, it appears had led a gay life and neglected his wife. Mrs. Wrandall starts back for New York in an auto during a blinding snow storm. On the way she meets a young woman in the road who proves to be the woman who killed Wrandall.

CHAPTER II.—Continued.

"There was nothing left for me to do but that."

"And why did you rob him?"

"Ah, I had ample time to think of all that. You may tell the officers they will find everything hidden in that farmhouse cellar. God knows I do not want them. I am not a thief. I'm not so bad as that."

Mrs. Wrandall marveled. "Not so bad as that!" And she was a murderess, a wanton!

"You are hungry. You must be famished."

"No, I am not hungry. I have not thought of food." She said it in such a way that the other knew what her whole mind had been given over to since the night before.

A fresh impulse seized her. "You shall have food and a place where you can sleep—and rest," she said. "Now please don't say anything more. I do not want to know too much. The least you say tonight, the better for—for both of us."

With that she devoted all of her attention to the car, increasing the speed considerably. Far ahead she could see twinkling, will-o'-the-wisp lights, the first signs of thickly populated districts. They were still eight or ten miles from the outskirts of the city and the way was arduous. She was conscious of a sudden feeling of fatigue. The chill of the night seemed to have made itself felt with abrupt, almost stupefying force. She wondered if she could keep her strength, her courage—her nerves.

The girl was English. Mrs. Wrandall was convinced of the fact, almost immediately. Unmistakably English and apparently of the cultivated type. In fact, the peculiarities of speech that determines the London show-girl or music-hall character were wholly lacking. Her voice, her manner, even under such trying conditions, were characteristic of the English woman of cultivation. Despite the dreadful strain under which she labored, there were evidences of that curious serenity which marks the English woman of the better classes; an inborn composure, a calm orderliness of the emotions. Mrs. Wrandall was conscious of a sense of surprise, of a wonder that increased as her thoughts resolved themselves into something less chaotic than they were at the time of contact with this visible condition.

For a mile or more she sent the car along with reckless disregard for comfort or safety. Her mind was groping for something tangible in the way of intentions. What was she to do with this creature? What was to become of her? At what street corner should she turn her adrift? The idea of handing her over to the police did not enter her thoughts for an instant. Somehow she felt that the girl was a stranger to the city. She could not explain the feeling, yet it was with her and very persistent. Of course, there was a home of some sort, or lodgings, or friends, but would he girl dare show herself in familiar haunts?

She found herself wondering why the poor wretch had not made way with herself. Escape seemed out of the question. That must have been clear to her from the beginning, else why was she going back there to give herself up? What better way out of it than self-destruction. She would advise the girl to leave the car when they reached the center of a certain bridge that spanned the river! No one would find her. . . .

Even as the thought took shape in her mind, she experienced a great sense of awe, so overwhelming that she cried out with the horror of it. She turned her head for a quick glance at the mute, wretched face showing white above the robe, and her heart ached with sudden pity for her. The thought of that slender, alive thing going down to the icy waters—her soul turned sick with the dread of it!

In that instant, Sara Wrandall—no philanthropist, no sentimentalist—made up her mind to give this erring one more than an even chance for salvation. She would see her safely across that bridge and many others. God had directed the footsteps of this girl so that she should fall in with the one best qualified to pass judgment on her. It was in that person's power to save her or destroy her. The commandment, "Thou shalt not kill," took on a broader meaning as she considered the power that was hers; the power to kill.

A great relaxation came over Sara Wrandall. It was as if every nerve, every muscle in her body had reached the snapping point and suddenly had given way. For a moment her hands were weak and powerless; her head fell forward. In an instant she conquered—but only partially—the strange feeling of lassitude. Then she realized how tired she was, how fiercely the strain had told on her body and brain, how much she had really suffered.

Her blurred eyes turned once more for a look at the girl, who sat there, just as she had been sitting for miles, her white face standing out with almost unnatural clearness, and as rigid as that of a sphinx.

The girl spoke. "Do they hang women in this country?"

Mrs. Wrandall started. "In some of the states," she replied, and was unable to account for the swift impulse to evade.

"But in this state?" persisted the other, almost without a movement of the lips.

"They send them to the electric chair—sometimes," said Mrs. Wrandall.

There was a long silence between them, broken finally by the girl.

"You have been very kind to me, madam. I have no means of expressing my gratitude. I can only say that I shall bless you to my dying hour. May I trouble you to set me down at the bridge? I remember crossing one. I shall be able to—"

"No!" cried Mrs. Wrandall shrilly, divining the other's intention at once. "You shall not do that. I, too, thought of that as a way out of it for you, but—no, it must not be that. Give me a few minutes to think. I will find a way."

The girl turned toward her. Her eyes were burning.

"Do you mean that you will help me to get away?" she cried, slowly, incredulously.

"Let me think!"

"You will lay yourself liable—"

"Let me think, I say."

"But I mean to surrender myself to—"

"An hour ago you meant to do it, but what were you thinking of ten minutes ago? Not surrender. You were thinking of the bridge. Listen to me now: I am sure that I can save you. I do not know all the—all the circumstances connected with your association with—with that man back there at the inn. Twenty-four hours passed before they were able to identify him. It is not unlikely that tomorrow may put them in possession of the name of the woman who went with him to that place. They do not know it tonight, of that I am positive. You covered your trail too well. But you must have been seen with him during the day or the night—"

The other broke in eagerly: "I don't believe any one knows that I—that I went out there with him. He arranged it very—carefully. Oh, what a beast he was!" The bitterness of that wail caused the woman beside her to cry out as if hurt by a sharp, almost unbearable pain. For an instant she seemed about to lose control of herself. The car swerved and came dangerously near leaving the road.

A full minute passed before she could trust herself to speak. Then it was with a deep hoarseness in her voice.

"You can tell me about it later on, not now. I don't want to hear it. Tell me, where do you live?"

The girl's manner changed so absolutely that there could be but one inference; she was acutely suspicious. Her lips tightened and her figure seemed to stiffen in the seat.

"Where do you live?" repeated the other sharply.

"Why should I tell you that? I do not know you. You—"

"You are afraid of me?"

"Oh, I don't know what to say, or what to do," came from the lips of the hunted one. "I have no friends, no one to turn to, no one to help me. You—you can't be so heartless as to lead me on and then give me up to—God help me, I—I should not be made to suffer for what I have done. If you only knew the circumstances. If you only knew—"

"Stop!" cried the other, in agony.

The girl was bewildered. "You are so strange. I don't understand—"

"We have but two or three miles to go," interrupted Mrs. Wrandall. "We must think hard and—rapidly. Are you willing to come with me to my hotel? You will be safe there for the present. Tomorrow we can plan something for the future."

"If I can only find a place to rest for a little while," began the other.

"I shall be busy all day, you will not be disturbed. But leave the rest to me. I shall find a way."

It was nearly three o'clock when she brought the car to a stop in front

She Sank to the Floor in a Heap.

of a small, exclusive hotel not far from Central park. The street was dark and the vestibule was but dimly lighted. No attendant was in sight.

"Slip into this," commanded Mrs. Wrandall, beginning to divest herself of her own fur coat. "It will cover your muddy garments. I am quite warmly dressed. Don't worry. Be quick. For the time being you are my guest here. You will not be questioned. No one need know who you are. It will not matter if you look distressed. You have just heard of the dreadful thing that has happened to me. You—"

"Happened to you?" cried the girl, drawing the coat about her.

"A member of my family has died. They know it in the hotel by this time. I was called to the death bed—tonight. That is all you will have to know."

"Oh, I am sorry—"

"Come, let us go in. When we reach my rooms, you may order food and drink. You must do it, not I. Please try to remember that it is I who am suffering, not you."

A sleepy night watchman took them up in the elevator. He was not even interested. Mrs. Wrandall did not speak, but leaned rather heavily on the arm of her companion. The door had no sooner closed behind them when the girl collapsed. She sank to the floor in a heap.

"Get up!" commanded her hostess sharply. This was not the time for soft, persuasive words. "Get up at once. You are young and strong. You must show the stuff you are made of now if you ever mean to show it. I cannot help you if you quail."

The girl looked up piteously, and then struggled to her feet. She stood before her protectress, weaving like a frail reed in the wind, pallid to the lips.

"I beg your pardon," she murmured. "I will not give way like that again. I dare say I am faint. I have had no food, no rest—but never mind that now. Tell me what I am to do. I will try to obey."

"First of all, get out of those muddy, frozen things you have on."

Mrs. Wrandall herself moved stiffly and with unsteady limbs as she began to remove her own outer garments. The girl mechanically followed her example. She was a pitiable object in the strong light of the electrolier. Muddy from head to foot, water-stained and bedraggled, her face streaked with dirt, she was the most unattractive creature one could well imagine.

These women, so strangely thrown together by Fate, maintained an unbroken silence during the long, fumbling process of partial disrobing. They scarcely looked at one another, and yet they were acutely conscious of the interest each felt in the other. The grateful warmth of the room, the abrupt transition from gloom and cheerlessness to comfortable obscurity, had a more pronounced effect on the stranger than on her hostess.

"It is good to feel warm once more," she said, an odd timidness in her manner. "You are very good to me."

They were sitting in Mrs. Wrandall's bedchamber, just off the little sitting-room. Three or four trunks stood against the walls.

"I dismissed my maid on landing. She robbed me," said Mrs. Wrandall, voicing the relief that was uppermost in her mind. She opened a closet door and took out a thick elder-down robe, which she tossed across a chair. "Now call up the office and say that you are speaking for me. Say to them that I must have something to eat, no matter what the hour may be. I will get out some clean underwear for you, and— Oh, yes; if they ask about me, say that I am cold and ill. That is sufficient. Here is the bath. Please be as quick about it as possible."

Moving as if in a dream, the girl did as she was told. Twenty minutes later there was a knock at the door. A waiter appeared with a tray and service table. He found Mrs. Wrandall lying back in a chair, attended by a slender young woman in a pink eider-down dressing-gown, who gave hesitating directions to him. Then he was dismissed with a handsome tip, produced by the same young woman.

"You are not to return for these things," she said as he went out.

In silence she ate and drank, her hostess looking on with gloomy interest. It was no shock to Mrs. Wrandall to find that the girl, who was no more than twenty-two or three, possessed unusual beauty. Her great eyes were blue—the lovely Irish blue—her skin was fair and smooth, her features regular and of the delicate mold that defines the well-bred gentlewoman at a glance. Her hair, now in order, was dark and thick and lay softly about her small ears and neck. She was not surprised, I repeat, for she had never known Challis Wrandall to show interest in any but the most attractive of her sex. She found herself smiling bitterly as she looked.

But who may know the thoughts of the other occupant of that little sitting-room? Who can put herself in the place of that despairing, hunted creature who knew that blood was on the hands with which she ate, and whose eyes were filled with visions of the death-chair?

So great was her fatigue that long before she finished the meal her tired lids began to droop, her head to nod in spasmodic surrenders to an overpowering desire for sleep. Suddenly she dropped the fork from her fingers and sank back in the comfortable chair, her head resting against the soft, upholstered back. Her lids fell, her hands dropped to the arms of the chair. A fine line appeared between her dark eyebrows—indicative of pain.

For many minutes Sara Wrandall watched the haggardness deepen in the face of the unconscious sleeper. Then, even as she wondered at the act, she went over and took up one of the slim hands in her own. The hand of an aristocrat! It lay limp in hers, and helpless. Long, tapering fingers and delicately pink with the return of warmth.

Rousing herself from the mute contemplation of her charge, she shook the girl's shoulder. Instantly she was awake and staring, alarm in her dazed, bewildered eyes.

"You must go to bed," said Mrs. Wrandall quietly. "Don't be afraid. No one will think of coming here."

The girl rose. As she stood before her benefactress, she heard her murmur as if from afar-off: "Just about your size and figure," and wondered not a little.

"You may sleep late. I have many things to do and you will not be disturbed. Come, take off your clothes and get into my bed. Tomorrow we will plan further—"

"But, ma'am," cried the girl, "I cannot take your bed. Where are you to—"

"If I feel like lying down, I shall lie there beside you."

The girl stared. "Lie beside me?"

"Yes. Oh, I am not afraid of you, child. You are not a monster. You are just a poor, tired—"

"Oh, please don't! Please!" cried the other, tears rushing to her eyes. She raised Mrs. Wrandall's hand to her lips and covered it with kisses.

Long after she went to sleep, Sara Wrandall stood beside the bed, looking down at the pain-stricken face, and tried to solve the problem that suddenly had become a part of her very existence.

"It is not friendship," she argued, fiercely. "It is not charity, it is not humanity. It's the debt I owe, that's all. She did the thing for me that I could not have done myself because I loved him. I owe her something for that."

Later on she turned her attention to the trunks. Her decision was made.

"The Black Pile Is Mine, the Gay Pile Is Yours!"

With ruthless hands she dragged gown after gown from the "innovations" and cast them over chairs, on the floor, across the foot of the bed; smart things from Paris and Vienna; ball gowns, tea gowns, lingerie, blouses, hats, gloves and all of the countless things that a woman of fashion and means indulges herself in when she goes abroad for that purpose and no other to speak of. From the closets she drew forth New York "tailor-suits" and other garments.

Until long after six o'clock she busied herself over this huge pile of costly raiment, portions of which she had worn but once or twice, some not at all, selecting certain dresses, hats, stockings, etc., each of which she laid carelessly aside; an imposing pile of many hues, all bright and gay and glittering. In another heap she laid the somber things of black; a meager assortment as compared to the other.

Then she stood back and surveyed the two heaps with tired eyes, a curious, almost scornful smile on her lips. "There!" she said with a sigh. "The black pile is mine, the gay pile is yours," she went on, turning toward the sleeping girl. "What a travesty!"

Then she gathered up the soiled garments her charge had worn and cast them into the bottom of a trunk, which she locked. Laying out a carefully selected assortment of her own garments for the girl's use when she arose, Mrs. Wrandall sat down beside the bed and waited, knowing that sleep would not come to her.

CHAPTER III.

Hetty Castleton.

At half past six she went to the telephone and called for the morning newspapers. At the same time she asked that a couple of district messenger boys be sent to her room with the least possible delay. The hushed, scared voice of the telephone girl downstairs convinced her that news of the tragedy was abroad; she could imagine the girl looking at the headlines with awed eyes even as she responded to the call from room 416, and her shudder as she realized that it was the wife of the dead man speaking.

One of the night clerks, pale and agitated, came up with the papers. Without as much as a glance at the headlines, she tossed the papers on the table. "I have sent for two messenger boys. It is too early to accomplish much by telephone, I fear. Will you be so kind as to telephone at seven o'clock or a little after to my apartment?—You will find the number under Mr. Wrandall's name. Please inform the butler or his wife that they may expect me by ten o'clock, and that I shall bring a friend with me—a young lady. Kindly have my motor sent to Haffner's garage, and looked after. When the reporters come, as they will, please say to them that I will see them at my own home at eleven o'clock."

The clerk, considerably relieved, took his departure in some haste, and she was left with the morning papers, each of which she scanned rapidly. The details, of course, were meager. There was a double-leaded account of her visit to the inn and her extraordinary return to the city. Her chief interest, however, did not rest in these particulars, but in the speculations of the authorities as to the identity of the mysterious woman—and her whereabouts. There was the likelihood that she was not the only one who had encountered the girl on the highway or in the neighborhood of the inn. So far as she could glean from the reports, however, no one had seen the girl, nor was there the slightest hint offered as to her identity. The papers of the previous afternoon had published lurid accounts of the murder, with all of the known details, the name of the victim at that time still being a mystery. She remembered reading the story with no little interest. The only new feature in the case, therefore, was the identification of Challis Wrandall by his "beautiful wife," and the sensational manner in which it had been brought about. With considerable interest she noted the hour that these dispatches had been received from "special correspondents," and wondered where the shrewd, lynx-eyed reporters napped while she was at the inn. All of the dispatches were timed three o'clock and each paper characterized its issue as an "Extra," with Challis Wrandall's name in huge type across as many columns as the dignity of the sheet permitted.

Not a word of the girl! Absolute mystery!

Mrs. Wrandall returned to her post beside the bed of the sleeper in the adjoining room. Deliberately she placed the newspaper on a chair near the girl's pillow, and then raised the window shades to let in the hard gray light of early morn.

It was not her present intention to arouse the wan stranger, who slept as one dead. So gentle was her breathing that the watcher stared in some fear at the fair, smooth breast that seemed scarcely to rise and fall. For a long time she stood beside the bed, looking down at the face of the sleeper, a troubled expression in her eyes.

"I wonder how many times you were seen with him, and where, and by whom," were the questions that ran in a single strain through her mind. "Where do you come from? Where did you meet him? Who is there that knows of your acquaintance with him?"

Her lawyer came in great haste and perturbation at eight o'clock, in response to the letter delivered by one of the messengers. A second letter had gone by like means to her husband's brother, Leslie Wrandall, instructing him to break the news to his father and mother and to come to her apartment after he had attended to the removal of the body to the family home near Washington square. She made it quite plain that she did not want Challis Wrandall's body to lie under the roof that sheltered her.

His family had resented their marriage. Father, mother and sister had objected to her from the beginning, not because she was unworthy, but because her tradespeople ancestry was not so remote as his. She found a curious sense of pleasure in returning to them the thing they prized so highly and surrendered to her with such bitterness of heart. She had not been good enough for him; that was their attitude. Now she was returning him to them, as one would return an article that had been tested and found to be worthless. She would have no more of him!

Carroll, her lawyer, an elderly man of vast experience, was not surprised to find her quite calm and reasonable. He had come to know her very well in the past few years. He had been her father's lawyer up to the time of that excellent tradesman's demise, and he had settled the estate with such unusual dispatch that the heirs—there were many of them—regarded him as an admirable person and—kept him busy ever afterward straightening out their own affairs. Which goes to prove that policy is often better than honesty.

"I quite understand, my dear, that while it is a dreadful shock to you, you are perfectly reconciled to the—er—to the—well, I might say the culmination of his troubles," said Mr. Carroll tactfully, after she had related for his benefit the story of the night's adventure, with reservation concerning the girl who slumbered in the room beyond.

"Hardly that, Mr. Carroll. Resigned, perhaps. I can't say that I am reconciled. All my life I shall feel that I have been cheated," she said.

He looked up sharply. Something in her tone puzzled him. "Cheated, my dear? Oh, I see. Cheated out of years and years of happiness. I see."

She bowed her head. Neither spoke for a full minute.

"It's a horrible thing to say, Sara, but this tragedy does away with another and perhaps more unpleasant alternative; the divorce I have been urging you to consider for so long."

"Yes, we are spared all that," she said. Then she met his gaze with a sudden flash of anger in her eyes. "But I would not have divorced him—never. You understood that, didn't you?"

"You couldn't have gone on for ever, my dear child, enduring the—"

She stopped him with a sharp exclamation. "Why discuss it now? Let the past take care of itself, Mr. Carroll. The past came to an end night before last, so far as I am concerned. I want advice for the future, not for the past."

He drew back, hurt by her manner. She was quick to see that she had offended him.

"I beg your pardon, my best of friends," she cried earnestly.

He smiled. "If you will take present advice, Sara, you will let go of yourself for a spell and see if tears won't relieve the tension under—"

"Tears!" she cried. "Why should I give way to tears? What have I to weep for? That man up there in the country? The cold, dead thing that spent its last living moments without a thought of love for me? Ah, no, my friend; I shed all my tears while he was alive. There are none left to be shed for him now. He exacted his full share of them. It was his pleasure to wring them from me because he knew I loved him. She leaned forward and spoke slowly, distinctly, so that he would never forget the words. "But listen to me, Mr. Carroll. You also know that I loved him. Can you believe me when I say to you that I hate that dead thing up there in Burton's inn as no one ever hated before? Can you understand what I mean? I hate that dead body, Mr. Carroll. I loved the life that was in it. It was the life of him that I loved, the warm, appealing life of him. It has gone out. Some one less amiable than I suffered at his hands and—well, that is enough. I hate the dead body she left behind her, Mr. Carroll."

The lawyer wiped the cool moisture from his brow.

"I think I understand," he said, but he was filled with wonder. "Extraordinary! Ahem! I should say—Ahem! Dear me! Yes, yes—I've never really thought of it in that light."

"I dare say you haven't," she said, lying back in the chair as if suddenly exhausted.

"By the way, my dear, have you breakfasted?"

"No. I hadn't given it a thought. Perhaps it would be better if I had some coffee—"

"I will ring for a waiter," he said, springing to his feet.

"Not now, please. I have a young friend in the other room—a guest who arrived last night. She will attend to it when she awakes. Poor thing, it has been dreadfully trying for her."

"Good heaven, I should think so," said he, with a glance at the closed door. "Is she asleep?"

"Yes. I shall not call her until you have gone."

"May I inquire—"

"A girl I met recently—an English girl," said she succinctly, and forthwith changed the subject. "There are a few necessary details that must be attended to, Mr. Carroll. That is why I sent for you at this early hour. Mr. Leslie Wrandall will take charge—Ah!" she straightened up suddenly. "What a farce it is going to be!"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

ACT ON FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Old Adage That "He Who Hesitates Is Lost," Is a Whole Bundle of Truth.

In a letter to a friend at a great moral crisis in his life Darwin expressed an observation which is confirmed by general experience. The action which had suggested itself to him when he first faced the crisis he had condemned as dishonorable. On further consideration, when he was sorely tempted to proceed, he told his friend of the struggle he was having, but added, "First impressions are generally right," and he proposed to stand by his first impression that the course in view would be dishonorable.

When a moral question involving difficulties is put up to a person his first impression is on the merits of the question, without reference to the difficulties of the course. Later the difficulties begin to loom up, and caution is apt to get the better of the doubter.

Reflection on a matter of disagreeable duty often paralyzes action. The adage, "He who hesitates is lost," embodies a store of wisdom.

Saying Came True.

The discovery that Scottish banknotes have actually been forged within the walls of Peterhead convict prison recalls an amusing incident.

Unlike the notes of the Bank of England (which are destroyed as soon as they find their way back to the bank), notes on Scottish banks are put in circulation again and again. The result is that some of these notes get very dirty, the one-pound notes getting particularly grubby and worn in the course of their travels.

An English barrister who was once given a sheaf of these notes in payment of a large amount, regarded them with horror for a few seconds, holding them delicately between his thumb and finger.

"Now," he said, holding them at arm's length, "now I understand the meaning of that saying about 'filthy lucer.'"

Triumph of Russian Art.

Russian art has captured the world, and today many influences are accepted from the Slavonic people. Not in opera and dancing alone, says the Pall Mall Gazette, do the subjects of the Tsar excel, but long centuries ago the peasants in remote and snow-bound districts had evolved art ideas for themselves, and they worked away quietly during the winter evenings. Hands, horny with the toil of cultivating the land, all winter produced marvels of delicate lace and of wood carving as fine as any weft made on the pillows during the summer. Recently the industries have become known beyond the confines of a district that for seven months in the year holds its folk snowed up in their humble houses.

Credulous.

"Yep," said Enoch Flint, lounging comfortably on the porch of the Squam Corners grocery, "when I was over to Russetville I seen a mighty queer critter that they called a calf, for want of a better name. Its mother was a cow, an' it had the body an' legs of a calf, an' the feet, wings an' bill of a goose. On its head it had feathers in the place o' hair. In the daytime it bleats like a calf, an' at night it honks like a goose."

"Wal, I'll be gol-twisted!" ejaculated Jason Squanch. "I must go right home and tell mother about that."—Puck.

SPRING FEVER IS HEALTHY

It Indicates Fresh Hopes and Renewed Buoyancy of Spirit.

How wonderfully tight the spring wander-lust for the countryside grips one!

Spring fever, with all of its healthfulness, is the harbinger of fresh hopes and a buoyancy of spirit.

I noticed a passenger on a Detroit-Chicago train the other day who had started out on his trip with the evident intention of becoming deeply taken with one of the best sellers, that he might shorten the trip between the two cities. You have done the same thing yourself.

But his book had been cast aside. He had read only a few pages. His interest in it had lagged.

From the car windows he was counting the fields now bared of snow. The ditches were carrying away the water and the still less sluggish creeks were now streams bearing the overflow to the rivers. The farmer, in his shirt sleeves, was repairing the fences after the winter drifts; the cattle showing proof of a winter's stabling and now heading here and there toward the meadows, seeking the new-green patches of grass; the farm help, in field and stubble, was putting into repair this and that necessary feature, here looking after his plow and there his harrow, and on all sides were scenes which reminded the traveler that spring was here, at last!

As the train sped onward and glimpses of the painter as he worked on the weather-beaten buildings were revealed, the interest of the tourist was aroused and, when I asked him the reason, he answered: "Spring is here and I feel its blood flowing!"

The truth was, that like many others, he was planning the work he was to do the coming summer. He was going out to the farm—his farm in Western Canada. He had his wells to dig, his horses to get into shape, his grain implements to fix up, his seed grain to prepare, and other details for the land that was ready to receive it. His was what might be termed an "unrest"—to get to the farm!

Thousands in Western Canada today are making the preparations that this interested man contemplated. Their summer fallows are ready for the wheat, their spring plowing is being attended to, fences are being rebuilt or being put into repair; indeed, the entire country is one great hive of industry.

Railroads are in readiness to take care of a great rush of settlers, those charged with the reception of whom are prepared to extend every courtesy and thus meet the rush with judgment and without the least friction. Thus, the enjoyment of the opening of spring is fully met.

At many of the stations throughout many of the middle western states, trains of settlers' effects are in readiness to move to Western Canada. Not only in these states are scenes of this kind to be witnessed, but, also, on either coast and throughout the eastern states there is the same activity among those going to Western Canada this spring. The crops have been heavy and all reports are that the winter was enjoyable; also, that the prospects for a satisfactory year were never better. There is plenty of land yet to be had by homesteading or otherwise. Adapted, as Western Canada is, to small grain farming, it is especially adapted to cattle raising and many of the farmers are placing small and large herds, as their individual means will permit.

The illustrated literature sent out by the Canadian government agents tells the truth clearly and the inquirer should send for a copy and if you be one of those who has an ambitious interest, you may be the gainer by a perusal of such information—straight, cold facts in themselves.—Advertisement.

Astonishing.

A happily married woman who had enjoyed 33 years of conjugal felicity, and who was the grandmother of three beautiful children, had a jovial old colored woman for a cook.

One afternoon, which proved to be the mistress' birthday, a beautiful box of flowers was left for her, when the cook happened to be present. Mandy eyed the beautiful roses longingly, then said, "Yu husban' send yo' all those pretty flowers yo' gits, Missy?"

"Certainly, my husband, Mandy," the lady replied proudly.

"Alleluiah!" exclaimed the cook. "He suttinly am holdin' out well."—Lippincott's Magazine.

No Proof.

"The world is mine oyster."

"And yet your purse hath but a barren bottom."

Marria[illegible]